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ABSTRACT

The stylistics of belief is the study of the ways in which language is used by speakers to express their beliefs, to convince other people they are right, or to avoid committing themselves to particular beliefs. Such study can contribute to an understanding of the ways in which people misuse and manipulate language for their own ends. The underlying belief system of the speaker, what linguists and philosophers call presuppositions, determines the choice of syntactic construction and specific words in a given utterance. The term "style" presupposes that there is not a single way of saying what we have to say, but in fact that we have available to us many possible choices for expressing outselves. The choice of style, however, is limited by our presuppositions, our estimation of our audience, and the contextual limitations dictated by our cultural expectations. Two linguistic areas that relate to analysis of style are syntax and word-choice. Syntactic exploitation refers to the use of sentence structures that permit deletion of linguistic material when deletion occurs in contexts where the reader is unable to recover the deleted material. Exploitation through word-choice can be divided into two types: the use of words for their emotional effect, their connotations, and for labeling; and metaphors. (WR)

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THE STYLISTICS OF BELIEF

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> . . .Will our new Edge, our new Deathkingdom, be the Moon? I dream of a great glass sphere, hollow and very high and far away. . .the colonists have learned to do without air, it's vacuum inside and out. . .it's understood the men won't ever return. . .they are all men. There are ways for getting back, but so complicated, so at the mercy of language, that presence back on Earth is only temporary, and never 'real'. . . .
>
> --Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow, p. 723.

SOME OF US MIGHT WELL WISH THAT OUR "NEW DEATHKINGDOM" WERE THE MOON. WE MIGHT WISH THAT THE "NEW EDGE" OF OUR LIVES, THE EXCITING EDGE OF EXPERIENCE THAT GIVES DEFINITION TO OUR EXISTENCE, WERE AS FAR REMOVED FROM US AS THE MOON IS. WE'VE ALWAYS FOUND IT EASIER TO COME TO TERMS WITH OBJECTS BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE AND THREATENING DOMAIN OF OUR PRIVATE LIVES. THE MOON IS STILL FAR ENOUGH FOR US TO BE ABLE TO TALK ABOUT IT AS SOMETHING UNCONNECTED WITH OUR LIVES. BUT THE "GLASS SPHERE, HOLLOW AND VERY HIGH" IS NOT SOMEWHERE OUT ON THE MOON. IT IS NOT THAT FAR AWAY. THE SPHERE IN WHICH WE ALL LIVE IS NOT EVEN GLASS; WE ARE MORE VULNERABLE THAN THAT. WE LIVE WITHIN THE WALLS OF OUR OWN ISOLATION FROM OTHERS, EACH BRICK OF OUR DEFENSES CEMENTED FIRMLY IN PLACE BY FEAR. We are our own Deathkingdom. THOSE OF US MAROONED WITHIN OURSELVES AREN'T ALL MEN, EITHER. MORE THAN HALF OF US ARE WOMEN. THE NEW DEATHKINGDOM IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES IS OUR CULTURE, AND THE SPHERE THAT SHOULD PROTECT US, BUT THAT, IN FACT, IMPRISONS US, IS OUR LANGUAGE. AND ALL OF THE WAYS OF GETTING BACK TO EACH OTHER ARE COMPLICATED, AND "AT THE MERCY OF LANGUAGE." BUT LANGUAGE

IS ONE WAY OF MAKING OUR PRESENCE HERE ON EARTH 'REAL.' LANGUAGE PROVIDES US WITH A WAY OF REACHING BEYOND OURSELVES TOWARD OTHERS; THROUGH LANGUAGE WE COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS, AND OURSELVES IN RELATION TO THOSE OTHERS WITH WHOM WE SHARE OUR FEAR AND VULNERABILITY. YET, ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT METHODS OF REACHING EACH OTHER IS, AT THE SAME TIME, THE GREATEST OBSTACLE TO OUR FREEDOM.

IF LANGUAGE ISOLATES US FROM OTHERS, IT HAS ALSO COME TO SERVE TO ISOLATE US FROM OURSELVES. I CANNOT BEGIN TO TRACE HOW ALL THIS CAME ABOUT: ALL THAT I CAN DO IS TRY TO DEFINE THE POINT AT WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES RIGHT NOW. THROUGH A VERY GRADUAL PROCESS WE HAVE BECOME ALIENATED FROM OUR OWN LANGUAGE. THAT IS, WE NO LONGER FEEL THAT OUR LANGUAGE BELONGS TO US. WE CANNOT TRUST IT TO ACCURATELY EXPRESS OUR FEELINGS, AND WE DO NOT TRUST THE LANGUAGE OF OTHERS.

WHILE IT'S POSSIBLE THAT IT HAS DEVELOPED FROM SEPARATE TRENDS IN OUR CULTURE, THESE TWO FACTORS HAVE COME TOGETHER TO PRODUCE THE PARADOXICAL SITUATION I'M DESCRIBING. FOR EXAMPLE, IT WOULD BE VERY EASY TO SAY THAT IT HAS BEEN PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH THAT HAVE DISPOSSESSED US OF OUR DESIRE TO LEARN THE INTRICACIES OF OUR LANGUAGE: IT WOULD ALSO BE EASY TO SAY THAT WASHINGTON POLITICIANS AND BUREAUCRATS AND MADISON AVENUE ADVERTISING COPYWRITERS HAVE CREATED OUR DISTRUST OF THE WORDS OF OTHERS. AND NO DOUBT, BOTH OF THESE SITUATIONS HAVE HAD SOME INFLUENCE IN BRINGING ABOUT THE PRESENT LINGUISTIC CRISIS. BUT THERE HAVE PROBABLY BEEN MANY OTHER FORCES AT WORK, SO MANY, AND SO SUBTLE, AND OVER SO LONG A PERIOD OF TIME THAT

WE MAY NEVER BE ABLE TO COMPREHEND THE WHOLE PROCESS OF BREAK-DOWN WHEREBY OUR LANGUAGE HAS BECOME SEPARATED FROM ITS COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION. FOR THE SAKE OF CLARITY, LET ME REPEAT HERE THE TWO ASPECTS OF OUR SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO ENGLISH: WE NO LONGER COUNT THE POSSESSION OF LANGUAGE AS A PERSONAL THING, AND WE NO LONGER LISTEN TO WHAT ANYONE ELSE IS SAYING BECAUSE WE CANNOT ASSUME THAT THEY MEAN WHAT THEY'RE SAYING. IF WE ACCEPT THESE TWO CONDITIONS AS RECIPROCAL ASPECTS OF THE SAME PROBLEM, THEN WE MUST SET OURSELVES THE TASK OF TRYING TO UNDERSTAND AS MUCH OF THE PROBLEM AS WE CAN, THEN WE MUST SET ABOUT SEEKING METHODS OF REVERSING THE PROCESS NOW IN MOTION.

FOR ALL OF US, BECAUSE WE ARE NOT OMNISCIENT OR DO NOT POSSESS PRECOGNITION, MUCH OF OUR EXPERIENCE IS CHAOTIC. WE DO NOT HAVE THE ABILITY TO OVER-SEE OUR LIVES, TO REACH A POINT OF AWARENESS FROM WHICH THE LARGER PATTERNS AND THEIR MINUTE INTRICACIES ARE CLEAR AND INTELLIGIBLE TO US. WE USE LANGUAGE TO INTERPRET AND ORDER OUR DAILY EXPERIENCES AND INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS. LANGUAGE PROVIDES US WITH A MEANS OF ORDERING EVENTS AND A STRUCTURE WITH WHICH WE CAN REPRESENT THOSE EVENTS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS. WITH LANGUAGE WE CONSTRUCT OUR THEORIES OF REALITY, AND EACH OF US HAS A UNIQUE WAY OF PUTTING OUR EXPERIENCES TOGETHER, AND AN INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION OF EVENTS IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD. BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER REMAINS THAT WE INHERIT OUR LINGUISTIC STRUCTURES FROM THE CULTURE, ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE MAJOR AGENTS OF OUR CULTURE, PARENTS AND TEACHERS. THROUGH THESE TWO PRIMARY SOURCES, WE ABSORB, AS WE ACQUIRE OUR NATIVE LANGUAGE, THE EXPECTATIONS, ASSUMPTIONS, AND DEFINITIONS SANCTIONED BY THE CULTURE INTO WHICH WE ARE BORN. THE TERMS AND

STRUCTURES FOR VERBAL EXPRESSION PROVIDED BY THE LANGUAGE WE LEARN DELIMIT AND RESTRICT THE POSSIBILITIES AVAILABLE TO US FOR FORMULATING OUR OWN FEELINGS AND REACTIONS TO EVENTS IN THE WORLD WE PERCEIVE. IN OTHER WORDS, WE ARE PUT IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO EXPRESS OUR CONCEPTUALIZATIONS WITHIN THE TERMS MADE AVAILABLE TO US BY OUR CULTURE AND, INEVITABLY, WE OFTEN FIND OURSELVES IN THE UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION OF HAVING TO EXPRESS FEELINGS THAT DIFFER RADICALLY FROM THOSE SANCTIONED BY OUR CULTURE IN THE ONLY TERMS OUR CULTURE PROVIDES. FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW, WE NEED TO SEEK WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN RECLAIM ENGLISH FOR OURSELVES AND MAKE IT THE COMMUNICATIVE VEHICLE FOR OUR BELIEF SYSTEMS RATHER THAN THAT OF THE BELIEF SYSTEM WE HAVE INHERITED FROM OUR PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

IN ORDER TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF INDIVIDUAL RECLAMATION, I THINK THAT WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND FIRST THE SECOND ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM AS I HAVE STATED IT; WE HAVE CEASED TO LISTEN CAREFULLY AND CRITICALLY TO THE WORDS THAT PEOPLE SAY BECAUSE WE HAVE LEARNED THAT MOST OF THE WORDS WE HEAR DON'T MEAN ANYTHING. WE HAVE HEARD WORDS BY THE MILLIONS VIRTUALLY EVERY DAY OF OUR LIVES; BUT WE HAVE LEARNED THAT MOST OF WHAT WE HEAR AND READ ISN'T WORTH THE EFFORT IT TAKES TO COMPREHEND. AS A CONSEQUENCE WE HAVE DEVELOPED A STUDIED INDIFFERENCE TOWARD THE LANGUAGE THAT WE HEAR THROUGH THE VARIOUS MEDIA. ALL OF US HAVE BEEN EXPOSED CONTINUALLY TO IRRESPONSIBLE USES OF LANGUAGE, AND WE HAVE BECOME INSENSITIVE TO WHAT PEOPLE ARE REALLY SAYING WHEN THEY SPEAK OR WRITE. WHAT I AM SUGGESTING IS LINGUISTIC CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING. IF WE CAN ISOLATE AND MAKE EXPLICIT THE WAYS IN WHICH LANGUAGE IS USED IRRESPONSIBLY BY OTHER SPEAKERS AND WRITERS TO OPPRESS AND COERCE US,

THEN WE CAN USE THIS KNOWLEDGE TO HEIGHTEN OUR AWARENESS OF THE EFFECTS OF OUR LANGUAGE USE ON OTHERS, AND OF THEIR USE OF LANGUAGE ON US. IN THIS WAY, WE CAN BECOME MORE CRITICAL BOTH OF WHAT WE HEAR AND WHAT WE SAY.

THE STYLISTICS OF BELIEF IS THUS THE STUDY OF THE WAYS IN WHICH LANGUAGE IS USED BY SPEAKERS TO EXPRESS THEIR BELIEFS, TO CONVINCE OTHER PEOPLE THAT THEY ARE RIGHT, OR TO AVOID COMMITTING THEMSELVES TO PARTICULAR BELIEFS. THE UNDERLYING BELIEF SYSTEM OF THE SPEAKER, WHAT LINGUISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS CALL PRESUPPOSITIONS, DETERMINES THE CHOICE OF SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTION AND SPECIFIC WORDS IN A GIVEN UTTERANCE. THE TERM STYLE PRESUPPOSES THAT THERE IS NOT A SINGLE WAY OF SAYING WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY, BUT IN FACT THAT WE HAVE AVAILABLE TO US MANY POSSIBLE CHOICES FOR EXPRESSING OURSELVES. THE CHOICE OF STYLE, HOWEVER, IS LIMITED BY OUR PRESUPPOSITIONS, OUR ESTIMATION OF OUR AUDIENCE, AND THE CONTEXTUAL LIMITATIONS DICTATED BY OUR CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS.

THIS DEFINITION OF THE STYLISTICS OF BELIEF BRINGS US UP AGAINST THE PROBLEM OF INTENTION: THAT IS, AS HEARERS, WE MAKE JUDGMENTS ABOUT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE PERSON SPEAKING TO US. WE WILL BELIEVE SOMEONE WHO AGREES WITH US, OR, EVEN IF WE DON'T AGREE, WE WILL GIVE MORE WEIGHT TO THE OPINIONS OF SOMEONE THAT WE TRUST. OUR JUDGMENTS OF INTENTIONS ARE THUS DEPENDENT UPON OUR estimation OF THE SPEAKER OR WRITER. IF WE BELIEVE THAT A SPEAKER IS TRUSTWORTHY, WE WILL DECIDE THAT HER INTENTIONS ARE 'GOOD'. IF WE DON'T TRUST THE SPEAKER, WE ARE LIKELY TO DECIDE THAT HER INTENTIONS ARE 'BAD'. BECAUSE

THERE IS NO WAY OF DETERMINING WHETHER OR NOT CHOICE OF SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTION AND WORDS ARE CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS ON THE PART OF THE SPEAKER, AND BECAUSE OUR DECISIONS REGARDING SUCH CHOICE ARE DEPENDENT UPON OUR JUDGMENTS OF THE SPEAKER'S INTENTIONS, AND THESE JUDGMENTS WILL DIFFER FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER, IN ANALYZING UTTERANCES, WE WILL NOT CONSIDER THIS PROBLEM HERE. THE STYLISTICS OF BELIEF EXCLUDES JUDGMENTS OF INTENTION, AND THE RESULTS OF ANALYSIS REVEAL ONLY THE CONSEQUENT EFFECTS OF SPECIFIC WORDS OR STRUCTURES ON THE HEARER OR READER.

I HAVE MENTIONED TWO LINGUISTIC AREAS THAT WILL CONCERN US IN OUR ANALYSIS OF STYLE, SYNTAX AND WORD-CHOICE. THE USE OF CERTAIN SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTIONS THAT DECEIVE OR MISLEAD THE UNWARY READER I HAVE ELSEWHERE CALLED "SYNTACTIC EXPLOITATION." SYNTACTIC EXPLOITATION IS THE USE OF SENTENCE STRUCTURES THAT PERMIT DELETION OF LINGUISTIC MATERIAL, which DELETION OCCURS IN CONTEXTS WHERE THE READER IS UNABLE TO RECOVER THE DELETED INFORMATION, OR IN CONTEXTS WHERE THE RECOVERABILITY OF THE MATERIAL IS DEPENDENT UPON THE READER'S AGREEMENT WITH THE AUTHOR. THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF SYNTACTIC EXPLOITATION: 1) THE USE OF DELETION TO REPRESS INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE READER OR HEARER FOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MESSAGE: AND, 2) THE USE OF SENTENCE STRUCTURE TO CONVINCE THE READER OR HEARER THAT THERE IS A MESSAGE AVAILABLE WHEN, IN FACT, THE UTTERANCE IS MEANINGLESS. ELSEWHERE, I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE USE OF LANGUAGE TO PRODUCE MEANINGLESS UTTERANCES IS AN "INAPPROPRIATE" USE OF LANGUAGE. THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF MEANINGLESS UTTERANCES THAT DE-

RIVE FROM THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT IN WHICH SUCH UTTERANCES ARE PRODUCED: 1) EMOTIONAL USES WHICH OCCUR WHEN THE SPEAKER FEELS THE PRESSURE OF ANXIETY OR HOSTILITY. THESE ARE MOST OFTEN THE RESULT OF OPPOSING OPINION. 2) FACTUAL USES WHICH OCCUR WHEN THE QUESTION IS ONE INVOLVING DATA TO WHICH BOTH THE SPEAKER AND THE HEARER HAVE SOME ACCESS, ALTHOUGH IT IS USUALLY THE SPEAKER WHO HAS THE MOST INFORMATION. THIS TYPE OF MEANINGLESS UTTERANCE IS WHAT WE USUALLY CALL THE LIE, WHERE THERE IS A CONFLICT BETWEEN WHAT WE ARE TOLD AND WHAT WE KNOW.

WORD-CHOICE CAN ALSO BE DIVIDED INTO TWO TYPES. FIRST, THERE'S THE USE OF CERTAIN WORDS FOR THEIR EMOTIONAL EFFECT, THEIR CONNOTATIONS, GOOD OR BAD, AND SUCH USAGE MOST OFTEN INVOLVES NAME-CALLING, STEREOTYPING, ATTRIBUTION OF QUALITIES, AND LABELING. THE SECOND TYPE, THE ONE THAT I FIND THE MOST INTERESTING, IS THE METAPHOR. METAPHORS, WHICH INVOLVE THE CHOICE OF WORDS IN WHICH THERE IS A RELAXATION OF THE SEMANTIC FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE, REVEAL VERY CLEARLY THE UNDERLYING PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE SPEAKER, THE WAY IN WHICH THE SPEAKER APPROACHES AND INTERPRETS THE WORLD. METAPHORS ARE BASICALLY VERBAL: THAT IS, THEY INVOLVE PREDICATIONS ABOUT EVENTS IN THE WORLD, WHICH IS THE REASON THAT THEY EXPOSE TO VIEW THE BELIEF SYSTEM WITHIN WHICH THE SPEAKER IS FUNCTIONING. THERE ARE TWO USES OF METAPHOR: THE CONSISTENT METAPHOR, WHERE THE SPEAKER TRANSFERS THE FEATURES OF ONE OBJECT TO ANOTHER CONSISTENTLY, AND THE "MIXED" METAPHOR, SO CALLED BECAUSE THE TRANSFER OF FEATURES IS NOT CONSISTENT, BUT IS, INSTEAD, CONFUSED.

LET ME NOW GIVE YOU SOME EXAMPLES OF THE TYPES OF LAN-

GUAGE USAGE THAT OPPRESS, DECEIVE, OR OTHERWISE MANIPULATE THE MIND OF THE UNWARY HEARER OR READER. THE SYNTACTIC CONSTRUCTIONS THAT PERMIT OPTIONAL DELETION OF AN AGENT OR AN EXPERIENCER INCLUDE THE PASSIVE, WHICH FURTHER EXTENDS TO RELATED STRUCTURES SUCH AS PASSIVE ADJECTIVES AND NOMINALIZED PASSIVES, EXPERIENCER PREDICATES LIKE SEEM, APPEAR, AND ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVES LIKE APPROPRIATE, INAPPROPRIATE, AND PROPER.

THE PASSIVE AND ITS RELATED CONSTRUCTIONS THEORETICALLY PERMIT THE DELETION OF THE AGENT IN CONTEXTS WHERE THE READER CAN ASCERTAIN THE DELETED AGENT FROM THE CONTEXT. HOWEVER, IN CERTAIN KINDS OF PROSE, THE AGENT MAY BE DELETED OR NEVER SURFACED, AND THIS DELETION HAS THE EFFECT OF CREATING AN APPEAL TO UNIVERSAL CONSENSUS OR A GENERIC PERSON, SO THAT THE MAJOR PROPOSITION OF THE SENTENCE APPEARS TO HAVE MORE WEIGHT THAN IT ACTUALLY DOES. IN OTHER CONTEXTS, THE AGENT IS DELETED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE AGENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTION. CONSIDER THE EXAMPLES IN SECTION II OF THE HANDOUT.

(1) a. Faculty members have to be treated as if they were cogs in a machine.
b. Alas, many husbands are now being emasculated via cigarettes and possibly the female hormones fed to chickens and cattle to tenderize their meat.
c. It is apparent that attention needs to be given to communications, and roles need to be more clearly defined.

(2) a. An expanded newsletter is being used and should provide much information that has not been made available in the past.
b. Men regard as amusing this exaggerated fad of trying to substitute the "Ms." for "Mrs."
c. The policy memorandums discuss ways to move these audiences in the desired direction, through such techniques as the controlled release of information and appeals to patriotic stereotypes.

(3) a. What is needed is more 'intentional' control, not less, and this is an important engineering problem.
b. The misuse of a technology of behavior is a serious matter.
c. What are the principal specifications of a culture that it will survive because it induces its members to work for its survival?

THE EXAMPLES IN (1) CONTAIN USES OF THE PASSIVE WITH A DELETED AGENT THAT CAN ONLY BE A GENERIC PERSON OR SOME GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL THAT THE WRITER DOESN'T WANT TO NAME OR CAN'T NAME. IN (2) ALL OF THE PASSIVES HAVE BEEN MOVED INTO PRENOMINAL POSITION WHERE THE AGENT MUST BE DELETED. THESE PASSIVE ADJECTIVES ARE PARTICULARLY HANDY FOR THE CAGEY WRITER BECAUSE THE AGENT CANNOT SURFACE AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PASSIVE ADJECTIVE AS A "BURIED" PROPOSITION SLIP BY THE READER WHO DOESN'T STOP TO QUESTION EVERY WORD. (2a) IS ESPECIALLY ENLIGHTENING IN THAT THE AUTHOR ATTRIBUTES EXAGGERATION TO AGENTS WHO CAN ONLY BE WOMEN WITHIN THE CONTEXT, BUT HE DOESN'T NEED TO EXPLICITLY STATE THIS PROPOSITION BECAUSE OF THE CONSTRUCTION, SO THE PREDICATION CANNOT BE QUESTIONED BY THE READER. IN THE EXAMPLES IN (3) WE CAN INSERT A BY-WHOM PHRASE AFTER THE SURFACE NOUNS CONTROL, MISUSE, AND SPECIFICATIONS, RESTORING THE LOST ARGUMENTS OF THE PREDICATIONS.

IN SECTION III OF THE HANDOUT, YOU WILL FIND EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENCER-DELETION. THE EXPERIENCER, WHEN SURFACED, USUALLY TURNS OUT TO BE THE FIRST PERSON, TO ME. BUT THESE EXAMPLES INDICATE THAT SUCH PREDICATES ARE OFTEN USED TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT EVERYONE EXPERIENCES THESE PERCEPTIONS, OR ELSE IT IS AN UNNAMED SOMEONE.

(4) a. We seem to be interested in judicious use when we admire behavior because we cannot strengthen it in any other way.
b. We seem to appeal to the miraculous when we call rewards and punishments just or unjust and fair or unfair.
c. By questioning the control exercised by autonomous man and demonstrating the control exercised by the environment, a science of behavior also seems to question dignity or worth.

(5) a. A person who responds in acceptable ways to weak forms of control may have been changed by contingencies which are no longer operative.
b. The outlines of an effective technology are already clear.
c. A self is a repertoire of behavior appropriate to a given set of contingencies.
d. If our attempts to control are unsuccessful, the cause generally lies in our choice of inappropriate means.

THE EXAMPLES IN (4) ILLUSTRATE WHAT DONALD SMITH HAS TERMED THE PSYCHIATRIC OR THERAPEUTIC USAGE OF SEEM, IN WHICH THE SPEAKER, FROM AN OMNISCIENT POSITION, IMPUTES TO THE MIND OF THE HEARER THOSE THOUGHTS THAT HE THINKS ARE THERE. ALL OF THESE SENTENCES ARE TAKEN FROM BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY, AND THE DELETED EXPERIENCER(S) ARE THE "DEFENDERS" OF FREEDOM AND DIGNITY THAT SKINNER IS ATTACKING. SKINNER USES EXPERIENCER DELETION TO PROJECT THE HYPOTHETICAL THOUGHTS OF HIS ENEMIES IN ORDER TO ADVANCE HIS OWN ASSERTIONS. THE SENTENCES IN (5) EXEMPLIFY THE USE OF ADJECTIVES IN PREDICATIVE AND PRENOMINAL POSITIONS TO EXPRESS VALUE JUDGMENTS DEPENDENT UPON ONE'S BELIEF SYSTEM. THE DELETION OF THE EXPERIENCER(S) IN THESE CONTEXTS CONVEYS THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE ARE UNIVERSALLY-HELD BELIEFS AND, AS SUCH, NOT OPEN TO QUESTION. FOR EXAMPLE, IN (5d) THE AUTHOR LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT THE ADJECTIVES UNSUCCESSFUL AND INAPPROPRIATE ARE JUDGMENTS WITH WHICH WE CONCUR.

THE SECOND TYPE OF SYNTACTIC EXPLOITATION IS WHAT WE USUALLY CALL "NONSENSE." SECTION IV OF THE HANDOUT CONTAINS TWO SETS OF EXAMPLES. (6) PROVIDES EXAMPLES OF THE SORT OF STATEMENT THAT POLITICIANS MAKE WHEN REPORTERS FORCE THEM TO SAY SOMETHING WITH RESPECT TO A SPECIFIC ISSUE, BUT THEY DON'T WANT TO SAY ANYTHING. IN (7) YOU WILL FIND EXAMPLES OF THE SUBTLE LIE, IN WHICH THE SYNTAX IS SO OBSCURE OR CONVOLUTED THAT IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO INTERPRET. BOTH TYPES

OF UTTERANCE SHARE TWO INTERESTING FEATURES: IF YOU'RE LISTENING CLOSELY, THE SPEAKER WILL USUALLY SAY MORE THAN HE INTENDED TO SAY, AND THE USE OF SYNTACTIC ORDERING CONVINCES THE HEARER THAT there REALLY IS SOMETHING HAPPENING SEMANTICALLY. OF COURSE, THERE IS SOMETHING HAPPENING, BUT THE MEANING CONVEYED IS NOT WHAT THE HEARER IS LOOKING FOR, AND IT IS NOT WHAT THE SPEAKER INTENDS.

(6) a. People who are not so smart may have a better understanding of generalizations but their lack of knowledge prohibits their ability to expound into an issue.

b. They would take more time to solve the solution because of the low level of their knowledge.

c. There is a danger of reasoning ourselves into inaction. From a military point of view, the U. S. could function in Southeast Asia about as well as anywhere in the world except Cuba.

d. Spiro Agnew, asked by a newscaster during the 1972 elections if he had anything to say about the Watergate Incident, said:

"I don't think people should be talking about something that shouldn't have happened,"

e. Homosexuality is a perversion and a threat to heterosexuality.

(7) a. "One thing that has always puzzled me about it is why anybody would have tried to get anything out of the Watergate," Nixon said. "Be that as it may, that decision having been made at a lower level, with which I had no knowledge, and, as I pointed out. . ."
(October, 1972)

b. How do the separate and disparate experiences of individuals lead to a common acceptance of general meaning but which also permit differences of interpretation?

c. One obstacle, lack of skill in the use of standard American English, has increasingly been recognized as a major contributing factor to the success of a child beginning his formal education.

d. In brief the strategy is to prepare the child for candidacy into the economic mainstream.

e. American shipping, both in and out, and our seagoing military arm would be succes-fully bottled up and forced to either pay high tribute or add several weeks to ocean voyages around canals and locks.

DICTION, THE SECOND AREA IN WHICH PRESUPPOSITIONS DETERMINE USAGE, IS THE MOST FAMILIAR AREA IN OUR CONSIDERATIONS OF LANGUAGE MISUSE, SO I WON'T SPEND MUCH TIME ON IT HERE, EXCEPT TO POINT OUT THAT TERMS LIKE MANNISH, WOMANISH, MANLY, WOMANLY, SISSY, AND QUEER ARE STEREOTYPICAL LABELS THAT PRESUPPOSE THAT THERE ARE "APPROPRIATE" AND "ACCEPTABLE" BEHAVIORS FOR PEOPLE, AND SUCH LABELS ARE USED TO COERCE PEOPLE INTO CONFORMITY WITH SOCIALLY-DEFINED ROLES. TO CLASSIFY BEHAVIOR AS EITHER MASCULINE OR FEMININE IS TO ASSERT THAT SUCH A CATEGORIZATION IS BASED ON FACT, WHEN IT IS ACTUALLY BASED ON CULTURALLY-IMPOSED BELIEF SYSTEMS.

THE SECOND AREA OF WORD-CHOICE HAS TO DO WITH METAPHORS, THOSE COMPARISONS THAT WE COMMONLY USE TO EXPRESS PERCEIVED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN OBJECTS. THE METAPHORS THAT WE CHOOSE REVEAL, IN THE FEATURE TRANSFERS INVOLVED, THE REAL-WORLD HYPOTHESES ON WHICH WE BASE OUR INTERPRETATIONS AND INTERACTIONS WITH THE WORLD. IN SECTION V OF THE HANDOUT, YOU WILL FIND EXAMPLES OF METAPHORS THAT EXPOSE THE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORLD THAT THE SPEAKER BELIEVES TO BE TRUE.

(8) INTEGRATION IS GOOD BUSINESS
INVEST YOUR DAUGHTER

(9) FACULTY MEMBERS HAVE TO BE TREATED AS IF THEY WERE COGS IN A MACHINE.

(10) FRESHMEN ARE INPUT TO THE UNIVERSITY MECHANISM, AND THE ROLE OF THE ADVISOR IS TO PROGRAM THE STUDENT SO THAT THE OUTPUT IS A SOCIALLY USEFUL CITIZEN.

(11) LET MERRILL LYNCH FIGHT FOR YOUR FINANCIAL FREEDOM!

ALL OF THESE EXAMPLES, EXCEPT (11) ARE DEHUMANIZING, IN THAT A HUMAN BEING IS COMPARED TO AN OBJECT. (8) IS BOTH RACIST AND SEXIST, ASSERTING that A WOMAN IS A MEDIUM OF FINANCIAL EXCHANGE, LIKE MONEY: THE RACIAL SLUR ASSERTS THAT THE ONLY REASON FOR INTEGRATION IS BECAUSE IT IS FINANCIALLY EXPEDIENT. THE ENTIRE METAPHOR PRESUPPOSES CAPITALISM,

AND PLAYS ON THE CULTURAL FEARS OF BLACK MEN. OBVIOUSLY, THE METAPHOR SPEAKS ONLY TO WHITE, MIDDLE-CLASS MALES, AND APPEALS ONLY TO THEIR BELIEF SYSTEM. (9) AND (10) BOTH REFLECT THE PREDOMINANT METAPHOR CURRENT IN UNIVERSITY SYSTEMS IN AMERICA: BOTH STUDENTS AND FACULTY ARE OBJECTS TO BE MANIPULATED WITHIN THE LIMITS SET BY THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION. WE ARE NOT TO FUNCTION AS HUMAN BEINGS WITHIN THESE SYSTEMS AND, IN FACT, (10) EXTENDS THE METAPHOR INTO OUR SOCIETY AS A WHOLE. (11) ALSO ASSUMES CAPITALISM, AS DOES (8), BUT HERE THE APPEAL IS TO PATRIOTIC IDEALS, AND IT ASSERTS THAT MONEY, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IN OUR CULTURE, IS SOMETHING THAT REQUIRES VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION. THE METAPHOR PRESUPPOSES THAT MONEY IS EQUATABLE WITH LESS TANGIBLE FREEDOMS, AND THAT MONEY IS WORTH A BATTLE.

YOU HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY NOTICED, AS YOU'VE READ THROUGH THE EXAMPLES, THAT ALL OF THEM CONTAIN ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES OF MISUSES OF LANGUAGE, AND OVERLAP WITH OTHER CATEGORIES. I DON'T THINK THAT THIS IS AN ACCIDENT. IN FACT, I BELIEVE THAT ALL OF THE TYPES OF LANGUAGE MISUSE THAT I HAVE CITED ARE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE BELIEF SYSTEMS THAT PREDOMINATE IN OUR SOCIETY, AND I THINK THAT THESE BELIEFS REQUIRE, FOR THEIR EXPRESSION, SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES LIKE THE PASSIVE, AND METAPHORS AND LABELS THAT DEFINE PEOPLE AS OBJECTS TO BE EXPLOITED AND USED BY THOSE WHO CONTROL THIS COUNTRY. THE ONLY WAY TO REDEFINE OURSELVES IS TO develop a hypersensitivity to oppressive uses of SO THAT WE BECOME language AWARE, CRITICAL LISTENERS AND READERS.